

**National and Regional Tribal Partner Organizations Letter
to the
House Natural Resources Committee Regarding the RESPECT Act - H.R. 3587**



September 2, 2022

The Honorable Raúl Grijalva
Chairman
U.S. House Committee on Natural Resources
1324 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Grijalva:

On behalf of the undersigned tribal organizations, we write regarding the concerns for the government-to-government consultation envisioned in the amendment in the nature of a

substitute (ANS) for H.R. 3587 - the RESPECT Act. As it is currently constructed, we cannot support this legislation.

The ANS language does not appropriately reflect our inherent sovereignty as it incorrectly includes Alaska Native Corporations (ANCs) as equivalent to Tribal Nation governments. While Indian Country includes governments, organizations, and corporations that all provide support to our tribal citizens, the Nation-to-Nation relationship, including the right of government-to-government consultation, is rooted in the inherent sovereignty of Tribal Nations and our diplomatic relationship with the United States.

We are in an era where we are trying to bring greater clarity to an often chaotic and confusing space due to various policy eras and an inconsistent approach to U.S.-Tribal Nation relations. Rather than serving to help clarify and reinforce the government-to-government relationship, the inclusion of for-profit ANCs serves to further complicate and confuse. It is critical that the ANS be revised to properly delineate between consultation with Tribal Nations and the incorporation of the views of ANCs, among other issues.

As a consistent champion for Indian Country and tribal sovereignty, we request that you continue to work and consult with Tribal Nations' leaders to ensure that the RESPECT Act reflects our inherent tribal sovereignty and codifies the right to tribal consultation as a sovereign-to-sovereign right.

Sincerely,

Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians

Great Lakes Intertribal Council

Great Plains Tribal Chairmen's Association

Inter Tribal Association of Arizona

Inter-Tribal Council of California

Inter-Tribal Council of the Five Civilized Tribes

National Congress of American Indians

Rocky Mountain Tribal Leaders Council

Tribal Alliance of Sovereign Indian Nations

United South and Eastern Tribes

Sovereignty Protection Fund

United Tribes of Michigan